

AUSA: Madison Reddick Smyser

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

23 MAG 7009

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

CYRON LEE and
RAWSON LEMONS,
a/k/a "Blink,"

Defendants.

SEALED COMPLAINT

Violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846

COUNTY OF OFFENSE:
NEW YORK

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, ss.:

FRANCIS CONEJO, being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is a Detective with the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), and charges as follows:

COUNT ONE
(Conspiracy to Distribute Narcotics)

1. From at least in or about January 2023 through at least in or about May 2023, in the Southern District of New York and elsewhere, CYRON LEE and RAWSON LEMONS, a/k/a "Blink," the defendants, and others known and unknown, knowingly and intentionally combined, conspired, confederated, and agreed together and with each other to violate the controlled-substance laws of the United States.

2. It was a part and an object of the conspiracy that CYRON LEE and RAWSON LEMONS, a/k/a "Blink," the defendants, and others known and unknown, would and did distribute and possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1).

3. The controlled substances involved in the offense were (i) 100 grams or more of mixtures and substances containing a detectable amount of fentanyl analogue; and (ii) 400 grams or more of mixtures and substances containing a detectable amount of fentanyl, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 841(b)(1)(A).

(Title 21, United States Code, Section 846.)

The bases for my knowledge and for the foregoing charges are, in part, as follows:

4. I am a Detective with the NYPD, and I have been personally involved in the investigation of this matter. This affidavit is based upon my personal participation in the investigation, my examination of reports and records, and my conversations with other law enforcement officers and other individuals. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of demonstrating probable cause, it does not include all the facts that I have learned during the course of my investigation. Where the contents of documents and the actions,

statements, and conversations of others are reported herein, they are reported in substance and in part, except where otherwise indicated.

Background

5. Since at least in or about January 2023, the NYPD has been investigating CYRON LEE and RAWSON LEMONS, a/k/a “Blink,” the defendants, for narcotics trafficking in the vicinity of 129th Street and Madison Avenue (the “Corner”) in New York, New York. Based on my participation in this investigation, my conversations with other law enforcement officers, and my review of law enforcement and laboratory reports, I have learned that between in or about January 2023 and in or about May 2023, LEE, supplied at least in part by LEMONS, sold an undercover law enforcement officer (the “UC”) more than 400 grams of mixtures and substances containing fentanyl over the course of nine narcotics sales. Over 250 grams of mixtures and substances sold in four of those sales (the “Corner Sales”) also contained para-fluorofentanyl, a fentanyl analogue.

6. On or about February 17, March 1, March 15, and March 30, 2023, CYRON LEE, the defendant, sold narcotics, including fentanyl and para-fluorofentanyl, to the UC. Based on my conversations with other law enforcement officers and the UC, my review of video recordings of interactions between LEE and the UC and communications between the two of them, my review of law enforcement and laboratory reports, and my participation in surveillance, I have learned, among other things, the following about these four sales:

February 17, 2023 Sale

a. The UC, via text message and a recorded phone call, arranged to meet LEE on or about February 17, 2023, so that LEE could sell the UC approximately 50 grams of “fetti,” which I know, based on my training, experience, and involvement in this investigation and others, including my conversations with the UC, refers to fentanyl. LEE and the UC agreed to meet at the Corner later that day to consummate the sale.

b. At approximately 5:12 p.m. on or about February 17, 2023, the UC parked near the Corner in the UC’s vehicle. LEE was with another individual (“CC-1”) near a red Volkswagen SUV with New York license plate KJN7294 (the “Red Volkswagen”), before walking toward and getting inside the UC’s vehicle. In a video recorded meeting inside the UC’s vehicle, LEE handed the UC one clear plastic twist containing a pink rocky, powdery substance. I know, based on my training and experience, that a “twist” is a plastic bag frequently used to hold small wholesale quantities of narcotics or retail quantities of drugs. The UC paid LEE approximately \$2,000. LEE then left the UC’s vehicle and walked back to CC-1.

c. Based on my review of license plate recognition (“LPR”) records, I learned that the Red Volkswagen crossed the Third Avenue Bridge from the Bronx to Manhattan at approximately 4:25 p.m. on or about February 17, 2023.

d. Based on my review of laboratory reports, I have learned that the pink, rocky powdery substance weighed approximately 50.44 grams and tested positive for fentanyl and para-fluorofentanyl.

March 1, 2023 Sale

e. The UC, via text message and phone calls, next arranged to meet LEE on or about March 1, 2023, so that LEE could sell the UC approximately 50 grams of “fetti,” i.e., fentanyl, in addition to 20 “yellows,” which I know, based on my training, experience, and participation in this investigation and others, including my conversations with the UC, refers to yellow oxycodone pills.

f. At approximately 3:58 p.m. on or about March 1, 2023, LEE got into the UC’s vehicle, which was near the Corner. In a video recorded meeting, LEE handed the UC one clear plastic twist containing a pink rocky, powdery substance and a second clear plastic twist containing 20 yellow pills stamped with “E712” and “10/325.” The UC then paid LEE approximately \$2,400, and LEE left.

g. Based on my review of laboratory reports, I have learned that (i) the pink, rocky powdery substance weighed approximately 50.270 grams and tested positive for fentanyl and para-fluorofentanyl; and (ii) 14 of the 20 yellow pills collectively weighed approximately 7.012 grams and tested positive for fentanyl. The 14 pills that were analyzed were consistent in size, shape, color, and physical markings with the remainder of the yellow pills.

March 15, 2023 Sale

h. The UC, via text message and phone calls, next arranged to meet LEE on or about March 15, 2023, so that LEE could sell the UC approximately 50 grams of “fetti” and 34 “yellows.”

i. On or about March 15, 2023, at approximately 3:30 p.m., LEE met with an individual (“CC-2”) in a grocery store, located on Madison Avenue. Law enforcement observed the meeting and saw LEE appear to touch hands with CC-2 in a manner consistent with CC-2 handing something to LEE. LEE then walked toward the UC’s vehicle, which was parked near the Corner, and got into the UC’s vehicle. During their meeting, which was video recorded, LEE handed the UC a clear plastic twist containing a white, powdery substance and a second clear plastic twist containing 34 yellow pills stamped with “E712” and “10/325.” The UC then paid LEE approximately \$2,800, and LEE left the vehicle, returning to the grocery store. LEE appeared to talk with CC-2 before leaving.

j. Based on my review of laboratory reports, I have learned that (i) the white, powdery substance weighed approximately 54.868 grams and tested positive for fentanyl and para-fluorofentanyl; and (ii) ten of the 34 yellow pills weighed approximately 4.934 grams and tested positive for fentanyl. The ten pills that were analyzed were consistent in size, color, and physical markings with the remainder of the yellow pills.

March 30, 2023 Sale

k. On or about March 27, 2023, at approximately 5:58 p.m., the UC talked to LEE on a recorded phone call to place an order for 100 grams of the “regular shit.” LEE offered the UC 100 “yellow t-shirts” for approximately \$1,500, and said that he had “60 something for sure.” Based on my training, experience, and involvement with this investigation and others, including my conversations with the UC, I know that “yellow t-shirts” is often used to refer to

yellow oxycodone pills. The UC replied that the UC would have to get back to LEE about the “yellow t-shirts” because of the cost. LEE said he wanted to “give the UC some other shit too,” which the UC understood to mean additional narcotics. The two agreed to meet later in the week.

l. On or about March 30, 2023, the UC drove to the Corner to meet LEE. At approximately 4:31 p.m., LEE got into the UC’s vehicle. During the meeting, which was video recorded, LEE handed the UC approximately 180 glassines, which contained a tan, powdery substance. Based on my training and experience, glassines are small bags, usually made of wax paper, that are used to package small wholesale quantities of narcotics. LEE also gave the UC a clear plastic twist containing 52 yellow oval pills. The UC stated, in substance and in part, that the UC only had enough money to pay for the 100 grams they had discussed. LEE told the UC that the glassines and pills were for the UC to sell on consignment, which the UC understood to mean that LEE expected the UC to sell the narcotics and pay him back after making those sales. The UC paid LEE approximately \$4,000.

m. LEE told the UC, in substance and in part, that someone would be there soon. At approximately 4:48 p.m., while in the UC’s vehicle, LEE took a FaceTime call from a contact named “Blink.” LEE then told the UC, in substance and in part, that he would be right back, and LEE left the location and met with another individual (“CC-3”), which law enforcement observed. CC-3 appeared to hand something to LEE. At approximately 4:51 p.m., LEE returned to the UC’s car with a black plastic bag with a large twist containing a tan, powdery substance. LEE also gave the UC a smaller twist also containing a tan, powdery substance, which LEE said, in substance and in part, was for the UC to sell on consignment. The UC then left the location.

n. Based on my review of laboratory reports, I have learned that (i) the tan, powdery substance in the glassines weighed approximately 8.54 grams and tested positive for fentanyl and cocaine; (ii) the yellow pills weighed approximately 25.656 grams and tested positive for fentanyl; (iii) the tan, powdery substance in the large twist weighed approximately 98.948 grams and tested positive for fentanyl, para-fluorofentanyl, and heroin; and (iv) the tan, powdery substance in the small twist weighed approximately 20.089 grams and tested positive for fentanyl.

CYRON LEE and RAWSON LEMONS, a/k/a “Blink,” Discuss the Corner Sales

7. Based on my participation in this investigation, my conversations with other law enforcement officers, and my review of law enforcement reports and court records, I know that on or about April 25, 2023, CYRON LEE, the defendant, was arrested on state charges, which included, among other things, rape in the first degree by forcible compulsion, in violation of New York Penal Law § 130.35(1). These charges were later dismissed. A cellphone was recovered from LEE during his arrest in the state case (“Lee Phone-1”). On or about May 30, 2023, the Honorable Stewart D. Aaron, United States Magistrate Judge for the Southern District of New York, issued a warrant authorizing the Government to search Lee Phone-1.

8. Based on my review of Lee Phone-1, I have learned, among other things, that since at least on or about February 2, 2023 through late April 2023, CYRON LEE, the defendant, communicated with a contact named “Blink,” later confirmed to be RAWSON LEMONS, the defendant, at a phone number ending in -4144 (the “-4144 Number”). LEE and LEMONS discussed the Corner Sales on or about February 17, March 1, March 15, and March 30, 2023—

the days that LEE sold the UC fentanyl and para-flurofentanyl, among other narcotics. These conversations between LEE and LEMONS include the following:

Communications Related to February 17, 2023 Sale

a. On or about February 17, 2023, at approximately 1:48 p.m.—several hours before LEE sold the UC narcotics on the same day—LEE engaged in the following text message conversation with LEMONS:

LEE: Yoo

LEMONS: Yoooo

LEE: Pick up

LEMONS: Tell 4 bro

LEE: Ok 4 o'clock??

LEMONS: Yea

LEE: Ok cool

LEMONS: Gimme 23

LEE: Ok / It's good rite n not touched??

LEMONS: Fire / U can pay 25 if you want

LEE: Lol 20 is better

LEMONS: 23 / Perfect I met I halfway / U

b. Based on my training, experience, and involvement in this investigation, I believe that LEE was setting up a meeting with LEMONS in order to obtain narcotics, as well as inquiring about the quality of the narcotics ("It's good rite n not touched??"). LEMONS agreed to the meeting and confirmed that the drugs were good ("Fire"). The two then negotiated the price that LEE would pay LEMONS for the narcotics, settling at "23," which LEMONS said was meeting LEE "halfway" in between "20" and "25."

c. At approximately 3:36 p.m. the same day, LEMONS texted LEE and said, "He running alil late u heard ima tell u when he in route to you," which I understand to mean that LEMONS was sending someone to meet LEE to provide LEE with the narcotics, but that person was running late. Approximately twelve minutes later, LEMONS confirmed that the individual he was sending to meet LEE was "[i]n route." Then, at approximately 4:24 p.m., LEMONS stated that "[h]e crossing 138 now," to which LEE said "Ok." Based on my review of Google maps, I know that East 138th Street is located in the Bronx less than a half mile from the Third Avenue Bridge and approximately a ten-minute drive to the Corner.

d. LEMONS then reported, at approximately 4:37 p.m., that “He there,” which I understand to mean that the individual who LEMONS had sent to meet LEE had made it. LEE asked, “Wat color the car or it’s the O trey from last time??” LEMONS responded, “Red it’s the homie,” which I understand to mean that the car was red—the same color as the Red Volkswagen. LEE then said, “Oh ok from before,” and LEMONS confirmed, “Yea.” LEE then said, “Ok getting dress,” which I understand to mean getting ready to meet the individual LEMONS sent.

e. At approximately 4:42 p.m., LEMONS asked LEE, “Your peoples there ?” to which LEE said, “Cross 38 as we speak,” and LEMONS responded, “Aii.” Based on my familiarity with this investigation, I believe that LEMONS and LEE were discussing LEE picking up the narcotics from CC-1 in the Red Volkswagen (“Red it’s the homie”), at least some of which LEE planned to sell to people, including the UC, who were arriving at the Corner shortly.

Communications Related to March 1, 2023 Sale

f. On or about February 28, 2023, at approximately 4:34 p.m., LEE texted LEMONS and said, “Yoo.” LEMONS responded, “Yooo,” and LEE said, “50 same thing,” which I understand to be a reference to 50 grams of narcotics. LEMONS then said, “Gotta gimme to 8:30” / “?”, to which LEE responded, “Talking to him hold on,” which I understand to mean that LEE was talking to the UC, to whom he planned to sell 50 grams of narcotics. LEE then said, “Ok he pulling up on me at 2pm 2mm [tomorrow] but I rather just have everything on deck ready becuz of the weather feel me!!!” Later that day, at approximately 10:38 p.m., LEMONS texted LEE and said, “Ima send it to you in the morning.”

g. The next day, at approximately 1:16 p.m.—approximately two hours before the March 1, 2023 sale—LEE texted LEMONS to ask, “It’s 25 or 23???” to which LEMONS said, “25,” which I understand to be a reference to the price of the narcotics. Based on my familiarity with the investigation, I believe that these are narcotics that LEMONS was supplying LEE to sell the UC later that day.

Communications Related to the March 15, 2023 Sale

h. On or about March 12, 2023, at approximately 6:15 p.m., LEMONS texted LEE, “Yoooo.” LEE responded, “Tuesday,” and LEMONS said, “Kopy” and asked, “Same thing ?” Based on my familiarity with this investigation, I believe the two were discussing whether LEE needed 50 grams of narcotics to sell the UC—the same as the prior sale on or about March 1, 2023—the next Tuesday, March 14, 2023. LEE then said, “Didn’t tell me exactly yet gonna hit me Bk today or n the morning to tell exactly wat he want u herd,” which I believe is a reference to the UC ordering narcotics from LEE.

i. On or about March 14, 2023—the next Tuesday—LEMONS texted LEE, “Yoo” / “I be there bro ima come,” to which LEE said, “Ok hit u when he n route,” meaning that LEE would text LEMONS when the UC was on the way to meet LEE. LEE then said, “If u have sum yellow t-shirts on deck lmk so he can try them,” which I understand to mean yellow oxycodone pills, to which LEMONS responded, “Bet.” A little later, LEE texted LEMONS, saying, “He linking 2mm [tomorrow] something just came up he said u herd.”

j. Beginning at approximately 1:32 p.m. on or about March 15, 2023—one of the days that LEE sold narcotics to the UC—LEE and LEMONS engaged in the following conversation:

LEMONS: What he talking bout ?

LEE: 50 / Did u get the yellow t-shirts for him to try??

LEMONS: Them shits ain't look rite they was mushy

LEE: Wow / Niggas fucking them shits up on the regular huh

[. . .]

LEE: Send a pic of them or I will c them n person if they on deck if not fuc it

LEMONS: I ain't fucking with them

k. Based on my training, experience, and involvement in this investigation, I believe that LEE was asking LEMONS for 50 grams of narcotics, which he would sell to the UC ("What he talking bout ?" / "50"). LEE also inquired whether LEMONS had been able to acquire yellow oxycodone pills, but LEMONS explained that the pills were bad quality ("Did u get the yellow t-shirts for him to try??" / "Them shits ain't look rite they was mushy") and that he would not provide them to LEE ("I ain't fucking with them").

l. Later that day, at approximately 2:15 p.m., LEE reported that, "He in route," meaning the UC was on the way to meet LEE. LEMONS then asked LEE for the address ("What's the addy again bro"), including a specific building where the individual LEMONS was sending could meet LEE ("Send me a building bro"). LEE responded, "129th n Madison," i.e., the Corner. As with previous buys, LEE and LEMONS discussed price. LEMONS said, "1250," to which LEE responded, "Oh no more 23 huh lol," and LEMONS said, "Hell no lol." LEE said, "Lol ima have to go up on him then lol," which I understand to mean that LEE would have to charge the UC more for the narcotics. Then, at approximately 3:26 p.m., LEMONS reported, "He there bro," which I understand to mean that the individual LEMONS had sent to deliver the narcotics for the UC sale was waiting to meet with LEE.

Communications Related to the March 30, 2023 Sale

m. On or about March 27, 2023, at approximately 5:45 p.m., LEMONS texted LEE and asked, "Sup your man" / "He ain't give you an ETA"? LEE responded, "Nah ima hit him u got the yellow tshirts rite?" LEMONS said, "I got a few," and LEE asked, "Wat a 100?" LEMONS said, "60 something," which I believe meant that he had approximately 60 yellow pills that LEE could sell the UC. LEE responded, "Cool." LEMONS said, "I got a few joints too at 23," to which LEE responded, "I just hit him waiting for him to hit me Bk!! His shit going str8 Vm so I sent a text." A couple hours later, LEMONS asked, "You giving me 2300 for the hundred ?", which I believe was a question about whether LEE was going to pay LEMONS \$2300 for 100 grams of narcotics. LEE responded, "Yup," and reminded LEMONS, "Dnt forget the yellow t shirts either."

n. On or about March 30, 2023—the same day as one of the sales to the UC—at approximately 3:29 p.m., LEMONS texted, “I got the ride here.” LEE said, “Ok cool,” and “Lmk abt the t shirts.” LEMONS called LEE at approximately 3:54 p.m. LEE did not answer but called LEMONS at 3:55 p.m., and they spoke. LEMONS then texted LEE at 4:16 p.m. and said, “17 min.” LEE responded, “Damn ok,” and LEMONS said, “Go downstairs in B.S.” LEE responded, “Lol I know.” At approximately 4:39 p.m., LEMONS said, “He almost there bro,” followed by, “Willis ave,” at approximately 4:43 p.m., which I understand to mean that the individual that LEMONS had sent to deliver narcotics was waiting to meet LEE on Willis Avenue. Based on my training and experience, as well as my involvement in this investigation, I believe that LEE was communicating with LEMONS to obtain the narcotics LEE sold the UC in the March 30, 2023 sale.

RAWSON LEMONS, a/k/a “Blink,” Uses the -4144 Number

9. Based on my review of Lee Cellphone-1, I learned, among other things, about the use by RAWSON LEMONS, a/k/a “Blink,” of the -4144 Number:

a. On or about March 14, 2023, LEMONS, using the -4144 Number, which, as noted above, is saved in Lee Phone-1 as “Blink,” sent CYRON LEE, the defendant, a text stating, “Bro send me all them videos In shit my shit erased everything.” LEE responded, “Wat videos??” LEMONS said, “All them shit from the pandemic we had.” When LEE did not send the videos, LEMONS followed up several times requesting them.

b. On or about March 18, 2023, LEE sent several videos. LEMONS responded, “Still missing the one I’m looking for . . . The one with you in Mikey hex shout us out . . . We’re in the club in Yonkers not duo that other shit. In the meek mill shit on in the background.” LEE then sent four videos, two of which were duplicates of the same video (“Video-1”). After receiving these four videos, LEMONS said, “Lol yea that’s the one.”

c. In Video-1, two individuals appear to be in a club with music playing and lights flashing. A still image from Video-1 is copied below.



d. During Video-1, the DJ yells out, “Yo, Blink, what you doing?” The individual on the left then turns around, as if his name had been called. Based on this interaction and the messages sent beforehand, I believe the individual on the left goes by the name “Blink.” The individual on the right continues to look at the camera.

e. The two individuals that are featured in Video-1 also appear to be captured in several of the other videos that LEE sent LEMONS on or about March 19, 2023. For example, one of the other videos (“Video-2”) features what appear to be the same two individuals drinking and singing along to music in a club, with lights flashing. A screenshot from Video-2 is below:



f. I have compared a photograph of RAWSON LEMONS, a/k/a “Blink,” from a law enforcement database to these videos, and I believe the individual on the left is LEMONS. In addition, based on my personal observations of LEE at the narcotics sales and my review of a photograph of LEE in a law enforcement database, I believe the individual on the right is LEE.

10. Further, based on my participation in this investigation, my conversations with other law enforcement officers, and my review of law enforcement reports and court documents, I have learned that on or about August 15, 2023, CYRON LEE, the defendant, was shot in the stomach and went to the hospital. At the hospital, staff recovered a cellphone from LEE (“Lee Phone-2”), which staff provided to law enforcement. On or about September 14, 2023, the Honorable Sarah L. Cave, United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York, issued a warrant authorizing the Government to search Lee Phone-2.

11. Based on my review of Lee Phone-2, I have learned that CYRON LEE, the defendant, continued to communicate with the -4144 Number until on or about June 1, 2023, when RAWSON LEMONS, a/k/a “Blink,” the defendant, informed LEE that he had a new phone number. In the Lee Phone-2 conversation with LEMONS at the -4144 Number, LEE and LEMONS continued to discuss narcotics. For example, on or about May 27, 2023, LEMONS texted LEE a photograph of what appeared to be, based on my training and experience, two bricks of narcotics:



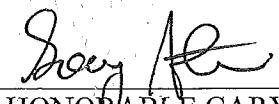
This particular photograph appears to be a screenshot of a Facetime conversation, with a picture of LEMONS in the bottom right corner. After sending the photograph, LEMONS said, “2 joints on deck let me know,” which I believe is LEMONS offering these two bricks to LEE to purchase. LEE responded, “That’s the animal right.” LEMONS then said, “Yea” / “Tyson.” Based on my training and experience, I believe that the terms “animal” and “Tyson”—i.e., Mike Tyson, the boxer, who has a tattoo on his face that resembles the stripes on a tiger—were references to how strong the drugs were. LEE then said, “Ok.”

WHEREFORE, I respectfully request that a warrant be issued for the arrest of CYRON LEE and RAWSON LEMONS, a/k/a "Blink," the defendants, and that they be arrested, and imprisoned or bailed, as the case may be.



FRANCIS CONEJO
Detective
New York City Police Department

Sworn to before me this 30th day of October, 2023.



THE HONORABLE GARY STEIN
United States Magistrate Judge
Southern District of New York